

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 3781

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, IS, RO, CH, KN
SUBJECT: PERES VISIT TO ROMANIA

REF: BUCHAREST 1646

1. SUMMARY: ISRAEL LABOR PARTY SOURCE DESCRIBED RECENT VISIT TO ROMANIA BY LABOR PARTY HEAD PERES AS SUCCESSFUL. THE TWO SIDES DISCUSSED THE ME, ROMANIAN EMIGRATION TO ISRAEL, AND BILATERAL RELATIONS. THE ISRAELI DELEGATION WAS IMPRESSED BY ROMANIAN PROGRESS. END SUMMARY

2. ISRAEL GAT, DIRECTOR OF THE LABOR PARTY'S INTERNATIONAL DEPT., ON MARCH 17 BRIEFED EMBOFF ON PARTY CHAIRMAN SHIMON PERES' RECENT VISIT TO ROMANIA (MARCH 11-15). PERES, WHO HAD NEVER BEFORE VISITED A COMMUNIST BLOC COUNTRY, HEADED
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LABOR PARTY DELEGATION WHICH INCLUDED MK HAIM BAR LEV, MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY IN THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT, MK MOSHE SHAHAL, LABOR PARTY WHIP, AND GAT. THE VISIT WAS MADE AT THE INVITATION OF PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU AND HAD LONG BEEN SOUGHT BY THE LABOR PARTY.

3. PERES HAD A PRIVATE THREE-HOUR MEETING WITH

CEAUSDESCU ON MARCH 11 AND THE REST OF THE DELEGATION (WHICH ARRIVED A DAY LATE BECAUSE OF A WORK-STOPPAGE AT BEN GURION AIRPORT -- PERES HAD COME DIRECTLY FROM BRUSSELS) ACCOMPANIED PERES TO ANOTHER MEETING WITH CEAUSDESCU ON MARCH 12.

4. GAT SAID THE TALKS WERE CONDUCTED IN A VERY FRIENDLY SPIRIT. PREDICTABLY, THE TWO SIDES HAD BASIC DIFFERENCE ON SETTLING THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT: CEAUSDESCU'S WELL-KNOWN VIEWS INCLUDE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL TO THE 1967 LINES AND PALESTINIAN SELF-DETERMINATION. CEAUSDESCU STRESSED THAT SADAT WAS IN A HURRY; HE SAID HE WAS URGING THE EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT TO BE PATIENT, EXPLAINING TO HIM THAT ISRAEL COULD NOT TO RUSHED INTO A AGREEMENT. AT THE SAME TIME, CEAUSDESCU IS PRESSING THE ISRAELIS TO SPEED UP THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS I.E., BE MORE FLEXIBLE IN NEGOTIATIONS.

5. ON THE QUESTION OF ROMANIAN JEWISH EMIGRATION, CEAUSDESCU SEEMED ACCOMMODATING AND GAT EXPECTS A NEW ISRAELI-ROMANIAN UNDERSTANDING SHORTLY WHICH WILL INCREASE THE RATE OF DEPARTURES FOR ISRAEL. GAT, WHO WAS BORN IN ROMANIA, DESCRIBED HOW PERES INTRODUCED HIM TO CEAUSDESCU AS AN EXAMPLE OF HOW HIGH ROMANIAN IMMIGRANTS HAD REACHED IN ISRAELI SOCIETY. CEAUSDESCU OBSERVED, "NOT HIGH ENOUGH; OTHERWISE THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN FULL PEACE BY NOW."

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6. ONE OF THE MORE HOPEFUL COMMENTS CEAUSDESCU MADE TO THE ISRAELIS WAS A REPORTED FAVORABLE CHANGE IN ATTITUDE TOWARD ISRAEL IN THE PRC AND NORTH KOREAN GOVERNMENTS. GAT SAID THAT CEAUSDESCU DID NOT GO INTO DETAIL BUT THE LABOR PARTY HOPES TO EXPLOIT THIS DEVELOPMENT BY MAKING CONTACT WITH THE CHINESE AND NORTH KOREAN REGIMES THROUGH ROMANIAN GOOD OFFICES.

7. CEAUSDESCU AGREED IN GENERAL TO CONTINUE EXCHANGES BETWEEN ISRAEL'S LABOR PARTY AND THE ROMANIAN COMMUNIST PARTY. GAT EXPECTS A HIGH-LEVEL ROMANIAN DELEGATION TO VISIT ISRAEL IN THE NEAR FUTURE. HE SAID HIS PARTY WILL SOON SEND A DELEGATION FROM ITS RESEARCH DEPARTMENT TO STUDY ROMANIAN NATIONAL PLANNING--SPECIFICALLY HOW THE ROMANIANS COORDINATE INFORMATION GATHERING, PLANNING AND DECISION-MAKING.

8. GAT MADE MUCH OF THE DEEP IMPRESSION ROMANIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT HAD MADE ON THE ISRAELIS. BAR LEV, WHO HAD VISITED ROMANIA IN 1974, SAID THE CONTRAST BETWEEN WHAT HE SAW ON THE TWO VISITS WAS STARTLING. STREET TRAFFIC WAS HEAVY; PEOPLE LOOKED WELL-FED; THE SHOPS WERE FULL

OF MERCHANDISE--GENERALLY OF GOOD QUALITY, EVEN IF THE
CLOTHES WERE NOT OF THE LATEST FASHION. THE ISRAELIS
WERE ALSO IMPRESSED BY THE SIZE, SOPHISTICATION AND ORDERLI-
NESS OF THE FACTORIES THEY VISITED.
VIETS

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